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SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [KV](#) [PO](#)
SUBJECT: PORTUGAL RECOGNIZES KOSOVO

REF: A. LISBON 2628
[1](#)B. LISBON 2630

Classified By: DEPUTY POL/ECON COUNSELOR TROY FITRELL FOR REASONS 1.4 (b, d)

[1](#)1. (C) After several months of indecision, the Government of Portugal (GOP) recognized Kosovo October 7. Foreign Minister Luis Amado also told Ambassador Stephenson privately October 8 that Montenegro and Macedonia would likely recognize Kosovo in the next few days. In addition to the recognition statement, the GOP made a surprising simultaneous announcement it would support Serbia's request in the UN to refer the Kosovo matter to the International Court of Justice (ICJ). FM Amado's Diplomatic Adviser Paulo Lourenco confirmed October 8, however, that Portugal would abstain on the ICJ issue.

[1](#)2. (U) FM Amado appeared in parliament on October 7 to issue a statement of recognition following recent consultation with all state structures. Amado gave four reasons why the GOP was taking this step:

- Kosovo's independence had become irreversible;
- International law had not been able to resolve the political issue;
- Recognition was important to support NATO and the EU; and
- Notice of the geo-political changes following Russia's intervention in Georgia.

[1](#)3. (U) While President Cavaco Silva has continued to express misgivings about recognition, his opposition Social Democratic Party (PSD) supported the explanation in parliament, and FM Amado stressed that agreement had been reached between the President and Prime Minister. The center-right Popular Party (CDS-PP) and the extreme left Communist Party (PCP) and Left Bloc (BE) opposed recognition but represent only 31 seats combined of 230 total. (Note: the decision was not up for a vote, but serious parliamentary opposition could have caused the government to refrain from action. End note.) Portugal was the final EU member state without a domestic separatist movement to recognize Kosovo.

[1](#)4. (C) Comment: After months of different explanations as to why recognition took so long, we are just pleased it finally happened. On ICJ, things were very much in the air until late on October 8. FM Amado and several of his senior advisors had told us they intended to join an EU consensus to abstain on the ICJ referral (reftels). Once the effort to forge an EU consensus failed, it appeared the GOP considered using that as an excuse to change its position. It would not have been atypical, however, given the GOP's usual desire for "balance." In this case, however, it would have resulted in a "balance" of disappointed allies.
STEPHENSON